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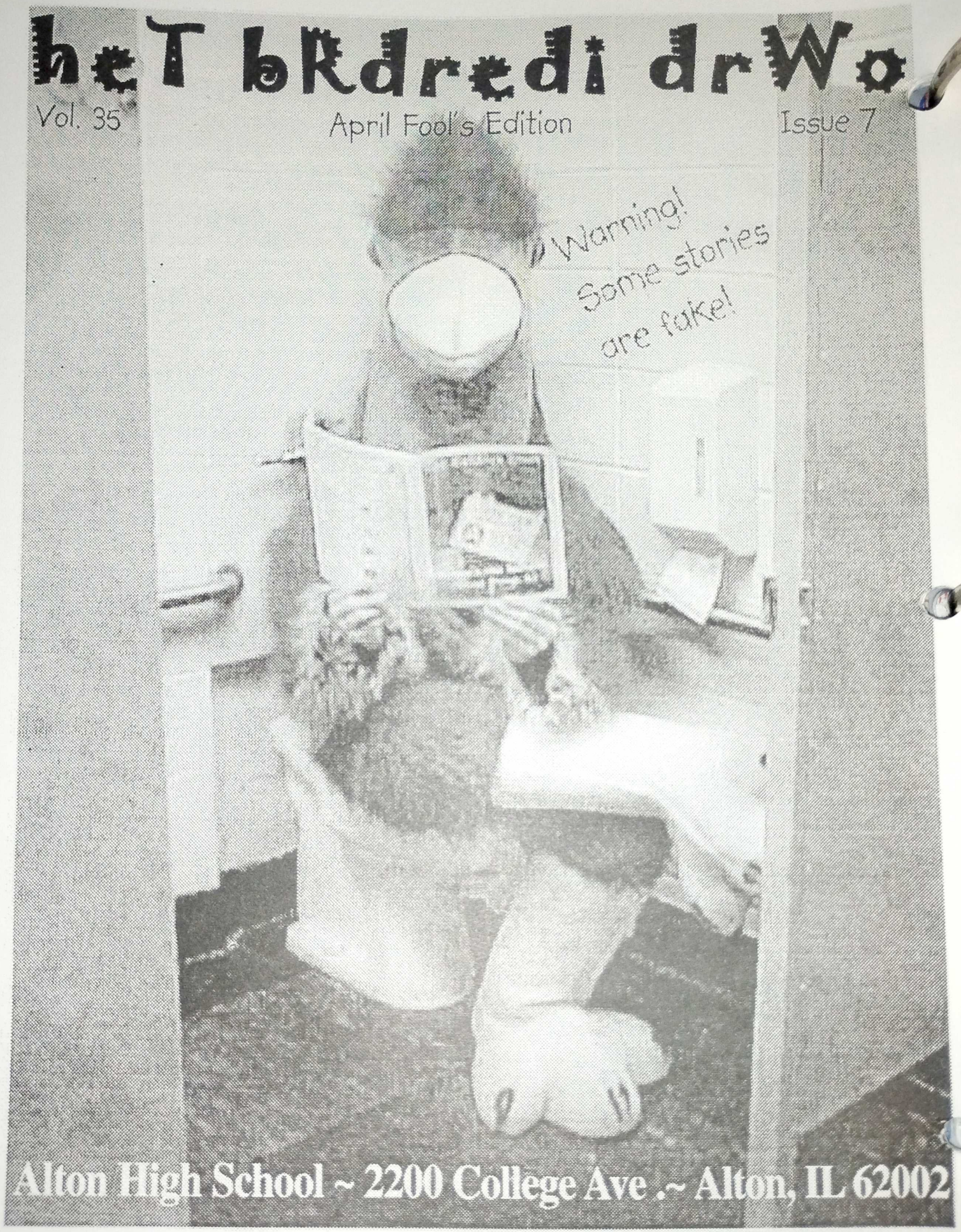
Vol. 35 April Fool's Edition Issue 7



Alton High School ~ 2200 College Ave .~ Alton, IL 62002

Alton School Board Fires Nine Teachers

Board gives them two choices: Resign or NOT be Renewed

by Nik Kern
Mananging Editor

At the last school board meeting the board unanimously voted to release nine nontenured district teachers. Despite pleas from concerned students, the teachers were still released. The Alton School Board informed the nine teachers that they had the option to either resign or the district would not renew their contracts for the next academic year. Of the nine teachers, four were from East Middle School, and one each from North Middle, Gilson Brown, Lovejoy, Alternative High School, and Alton High School.

The following Alton School District teachers resigned: Nickie Barrett, Tironica Dent, Shonna Gaither, Tracey Matzenbacher, Rebeca Plunk, and Christopher Vance. The other three teachers, Sarah Kane, Christen Ponkaw, and Laura Meyers McGee decided not to have their contracts renewed for the next academic year.

Special Education teacher, Laura Meyers-McGee's contract was not renewed. A campaign to save her job was led by her father, which involved memos, and letters from parents and teachers. Despite his efforts and the efforts of other parents and teachers, the board still voted to remove this teacher. "School Districts are releasing teachers in arbitrary manor. They feel they are above the law," said IEA Area Representative Ric Stephenson.

"We think everyone should have an opportunity for due process to be provided to these individuals. The district's view of the issue is because of the new tenure laws, they do not have to provide due process in these cases," Stephenson said.

"It is scary not to have job security," said Stephenson. "Why would anyone want to enter this profession, get good evaluations, and lose there job at the whim of an administrator?"

Sarah Kane, from Alton High School, the instructor of Jobs for Illinois Graduates, was another teacher released from the district. The grant that funds her class was not received for next year.

Next Step on Terror

by Kenny Ross

As the war in Afghanistan seems to be winding down, many Americans and students of Alton High wonder what will happen next? Junior Paul Clark said, "Who are we going to go after next? I mean when are we going to go after this 'axis of evil'? I keep hearing about it, what is the 'axis of evil?'" Though it may seem like the U.S. is not doing anything right now, we are preparing for the next phase in the war on terrorism, the attack on the "axis of evil."

The "axis of evil," named by President Bush in his State of the Union Address, included the nations of Iraq, Iran, and North Korea. All three of these nations are known to export terrorism throughout the world and actively pursue an anti-American foreign policy. Saddam Hussein and Iraq are known to actively support al-Qaeda in its war against the United States by supplying money and training camps. Iran's ruling religious Mullahs have given refuge to fleeing al-Qaeda terrorists from Afghanistan. North Korea is known to have supplied al-Qaeda and the Taliban with much of its military hardware.

The Bush Administration has marked Iraq as the first target in this second phase of the war on terrorism. The administration is having trouble getting key U.S. Allies in the Middle East region to help in an attack to remove the Dictator of Iraq, Hussein. Saudi Arabia and the rest of the conservative pro-West nations on the Arabian Peninsula are willing to help the Americans remove Hussein and replace him with a pro-West democracy.

Frank Micelotta / AP

The spread of democratic ideas in the region could seriously undermine their control of their own respective countries. In these countries they rule as monarchs with a closed society that has few rights for its people. Right now the U.S. is trying to convince them of the importance of replacing this fearless dictator and move towards a more stable nation that condones terrorism and terrorist activities.

A new effort to remove Hussein from power will probably not resemble the Gulf War that occurred in 1992. Special forces, similar to those that started the war in Afghanistan, and native war tribes, such as the Kurds and Shiites, will be used to topple the regime.

"With or without support of U.S. Allies we are prepared to go after Iraq and remove Hussein from power, even if that means going in alone," said Secretary of State Colin Powell in a release to the press.

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Four Teens Join the Illinois State Police Youth Council

by Courtney Schien

Four Alton High School Student Council Members recently joined the Illinois State Police Youth Council. Our District 11 section of the Youth Council is called "Teens Called to Serve."

The four students inducted into the Youth Council are Shadey Weeden, Rachel Bryant, Steven Johns and Samantha Gaddy. The students named their small group "MAD" (Making a Difference).

"I chose students that I thought would really want to make a difference in our school," said Student Council sponsor Mrs. Connors.

The purpose of this group is to come up with ways to make area communities better by combining ideas. By participating in the project competition, each school will get to see how other schools dealt with their problems and maybe even apply those ideas to their own school.

There are 20 different schools in District 11 that are competing against each other on May 15. Each group must come up with a project demonstrating how they feel that certain area problems should be dealt with. They have decided that the biggest problems that teens at Alton High School face involve teen pregnancy, student to student relationships, and student to police relationships. The winner of the competition will be awarded a $1000 scholarship. Second place winners will receive a $750 scholarship, and third place winners will receive a $500 scholarship.

"I really like being involved in the Illinois State Police Youth Council because it really gives the students the opportunity to make a difference in our school and community," said junior Rachel Bryant.

Alton High's group, "MAD," is very excited and hopeful to see what the outcome of the competition will be and to see if any other ideas are put to work in our school.

Community Welcomes Grant for New School

Prop A Passes Second Time Around

by Adam Betz
News Editor

Tuesday, March 19, 2002 the voters of the Alton school district voted on the referendum. It passed with a small majority. An eight percent margin, 54 percent to 46 percent, was the final results of the vote on Proposition A.

As a result of the referendum being passed, the school district will receive about $23 million. Last year, if the referendum had passed, it would only have been worth about $9.3 million. The cost of the school will be close to $38 million.

The money for the referendum will be generated by a nine cent (per $100 of assessed valuation) tax rate increase that will take effect in the summer of 2003.

"The school district needs something to make it top of the line, and I think the new high school could be just the thing," said Assistant Principal Jim Glaeser.

The new high school will have many effects on the extracurricular activities. The facilities should be large enough to accommodate all sporting practices and provide much more room for things like music and theater.

The high school is planned to be completed in three to four years. If that holds true, then the new high school should be completed in the 2004-2005 school year.

"I will miss this place as a high school, but I am glad to see the advancement. It has served its purpose and it is time to move on," said Glaeser.

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Prom Styles Facials Make Up French Manicure Cuts Styles

Freshman Initiation: Is it necessary?

by Jennifer Frederick
Cover Editor and Photographer

The past years of Alton High have seen freshmen or new players of all sports looking ridiculous on the first day of a game or match. This is called "Freshman Initation", a sports traditation at AHS. The returning players get to decide how to embarrass the newcomers. Many have passed girls in the halls with half their hair up and stuff written all over their faces.

During a trip to the soda machine many students witnessed Varsity soccer player Chrissy Campbell writing .on some poor girls face. Campbell looked very happy while doing this tradition.

Other sports, like softball, have initiation as well. Varsity Captain Carol Lyons said, " I have no idea yet. But if I did know I wouldn't tell you because it would ruin the fun of it."

The boys' soccer team this year had fun with their initiation. The incoming boys had to wear their uniforms and shinguards. If they did not wear their shinguards then they would get kicked. After a day of getting laughed at and possibly getting kicked , it was time to go to practice and get wedgies from the older players.

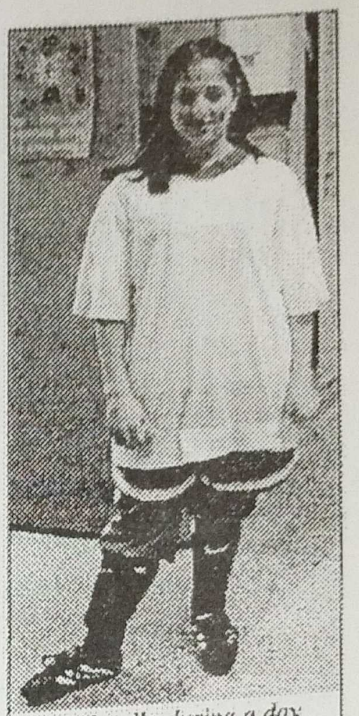
Cheerleading did not have an initation this year because of complaints. In years past members of the team said they had shaving cream fights at camp over the summer.

At Poms camp this year they made the newcomers dress up as dogs and wear a collar and drink out of a bowl.

Is freshman initiation really needed?

" Yea, because they are freshman and they need to know what they have in store for their upcoming years," said junior Louis Robinson.

" Yea, I think it is fun and it is a tradition throughout all the sports at AHS," said junior Erica Viviano.



Nicki Nasello during a day of Freshman Initation. Photo by Jennifer Frederick

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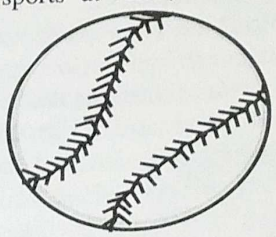


Upcoming Sports Events

April 10-20

Boys' Tennis-4/10 Edwardsville-home, 4/15 Althoff-away, 4/17 Waterloo-away, 4/18-Christian Bros. Col. (MO)-home

Baseball- 4/11 Granite City-away, 4/13 Jacksonville-away, 4/16 Collinsville-home, 4/19 Chaminade-home

Softball-4/11 Granite City-home, 4/15 Calhoun-away, 4/16 Collinsville-away, 4/17 Cahokia-home,4/19 CM-home, 4/20 Southwestern-away

Soccer-4/11 CM-home, 4/15-19 Alton Invitational Tournament-home

Boys' Track-4/12 Orphan Relays-away, 4/15 East St.Louis-away, 4/17 Tiger Relays-away

Girls'Track-4/10 Tiger Relays-away, 4/12 Panther Invitational-away, 4/18 Alton Invitational-home, 4/19 Tiger Frosh Relays-away, 4/20 Oakville Invitational-away

Lacrosse - 4/15 Southwestern at AHS New Lacrosse Field

*All events are varsity sports.

Golf Tournament Raises Funds

Alton Athletic Association is having a fund raiser golf tournament at Spencer T. Olin. April 5, 2002 at 12:30 pm It will be a shotgun start. Registration and lunch will be at 11:00 am. . Cost is $100 per player.

With your entry you will get an Alton Redbird shirt, range balls one hour before tournament, lunch, dinner. During dinner there will be a silent auction and several prizes for you to win. For more information call Todd Cress at 466-0674.

Congrats on making it to State, AHS Poms!!!!!

Carol's Corner: What You Can Learn From Sports

by Carol Lyons
Sports Editor

Playing sports has helped me to be a better person. I credit my parents for fulfilling my desires to be an athlete. Without the skills that I obtained through sports I wouldn't be the person I am today. What many people don't realize is that the attitudes and behavior taught to children and teens in sports carries over to their adult life.

Some benefits of playing sports:

1. Develops good sportsmanship.
2. Gives self- confidence.
3. It teaches you how to cope with disappointments and losing.
4. Gives a sense of belonging.
5. Teaches how to perform under pressure.

One other big benefit of sports, found in most children and teens, is that it serves as an antidrug. Without the benefits of sports who's to say where me and other children and teens would be right now.

LACROSSE IS HERE

by Nik Kern
Managing Editor

AHS may make it to finals this year after all, but not in basketball. Alton High School's debut lacrosse team is geared up for a winning season. With winning on their minds, the lacrosse team practices every day after school. The weekends have not been a social time for the team, either Saturdays consist of all day practices, and strategic planning on Sunday evenings.

The team consists of 12 seniors, 15 juniors, and a mere three sophomores. "The team is made up of very talented students," said Joseph Lartzon, lacrosse coach, "but we didn't want any freshmen on the team. They (the freshmen) are too puny and would just get killed out there."

The team was funded by a special grant from the State of Illinois which allowed the school to fund a sports team, not academics. The $1.2 million grant allowed the school to purchase uniforms, safety equipment, and field equipment. The teams first game is April 15 at the new AHS lacrosse field.

Zumwalt is Swimming His Way to Nationals

by Andrea Zimmerman

A week of vacation from school was incentive enough for Wayne Zumwalt to swim a little faster at the district championship swim meet. Zumwalt, a junior at Alton High School, has qualified for the National Swim Meet in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

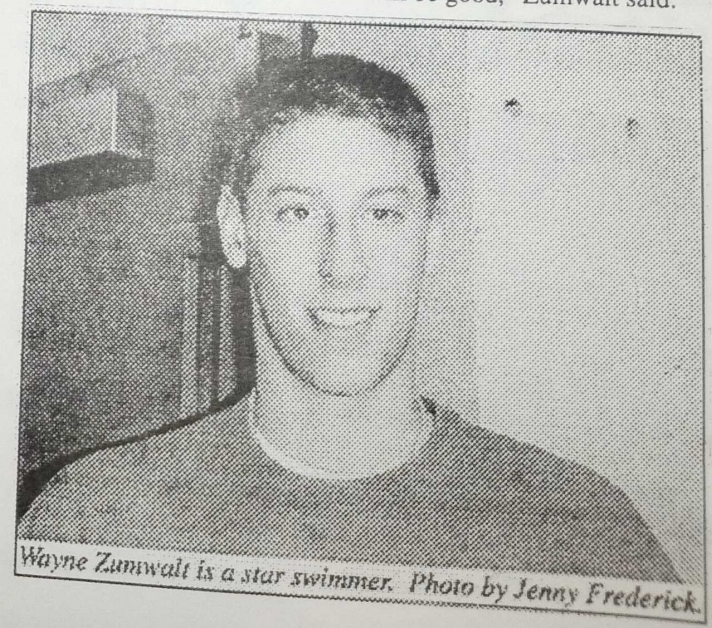
Zumwalt swam qualifying times on March 3, 2002 at the SIUE Vadalabene Center. He made national qualifying times in the 100 meter butterfly and in the 100 meter free style.

> "I really didn't expect to qualify. I was surprised."

"I really didn't expect to qualify. I was surprised," said Zumwalt when asked about the outcome of the meet. "This year I want to go for the experience, but next year I will really go for it."

This year has been stellar for Zumwalt. Along with qualifying for Nationals, he became the first male swimmer from AHS in 13 years to qualify for the Illinois High School Association's state championship swim meet.

Zumwalt knows perseverance is key. "Swimming is not easy. It takes a lot of endurance. It can also be a lot of fun. There are days when you want to quit, but you don't. It is a lot of work and you don't always know if the outcome will be good," Zumwalt said.



Wayne Zumwalt is a star swimmer. Photo by Jenny Frederick.

40 Days and 40 Nights Represents the Average Joe's Worst Nightmare

by Kari Oglesby
Backpage Editor

One man is about to do the unthinkable. No sex, whatsoever, for 40 days and 40 nights.

Josh Hartnett plays a young man who works for an internet company, Matt, who is suffering since his break up with his girlfriend, Nicole, six months ago. Matt has visions of a black hole appearing on the ceiling whenever he is having sex with a woman, which happens very often. Matt confides in his brother, John (Adam Trese), a priest completing his period of probation. John is not the strength or inspiration that Matt is looking for. Then by design or pure insanity, Matt chooses to be abstinent for 40 days and nights, his sacrifice for Lent. He becomes very dedicated to his abstinence.

No one believes Matt will last 40 days, much less a week. Among the faithless is Matt's roommate, Ryan (Paulo Costanzo), who betrays Matt's confidence and tells Matt's coworkers. They start a pool on a website predicting Matt's demise.

In the meantime, Matt pursues a relationship with a great girl, Erica (Shannyn Sossamon), who he met at a local laundromat. Also by design, it just happens that Erica has a history of dating weirdos, and she works for Cyber Nanny, a company that safeguards against porn-sites. Matt also finds out that Nicole is back from Europe and now engaged, and she will not let him forget this. What makes the movie special is that Matt falls in love with Erica without sleeping with her, and that he remains abstinent. This is refreshing.

Josh Hartnett is great here. His portrayal of Matt as a good-looking, charming guy who makes a difficult choice and lives with it, is a good performance. Hartnett also comes across as empathic as a man thrust in an almost impossible situation, while everyone is betting on his failure. He has a quiet strength about him, is very funny, and is totally believable.

Shannyn Sossamon is stunning, and you can see why Matt falls for her. When she wonders if Matt is gay is a moment of hilarity. Sossamon's Erica is smart and compassionate with great humanity. Playing a woman wondering why the guy she is attracted to doesn't want to have sex with her is not an easy role nor a natural one.

Pomeroy Goes Mainstream

by Diane Holden
Senior Editor

There is a new band trying to bust its way into the music world.

Pomeroy is a five member from Kansas City. The band consists of Chris Davis on the drums/hand percussions, John Etzel on the keyboards, David Fairbanks vocalist/hand percussion, Dean Hopkins playing bass, and Matt Marron on guitar/vocals.

To describe Pomeroy's music, that emphasizes on the Midwest, you would have to combine the sounds of 311 and The Urge, a local band from St. Louis.

When visiting the St. Louis area, Pomeroy always gives a shout out to The Urge for giving them the opportunity to open for them when The Urge played one of their final shows in December 2001. They also give thanks to them on their new CD.

Pomeroy released its first ten track album, *Inside the Shine,* in April of 1999. Now they are celebrating their second release of October 2001, entitled *Cocoon Club* on Get Go! Records. *Cocoon Club* has 11 tracks. The album also features a cover song for "The Devil Went Down to Georgia" originally by the Charlie Daniels Band.

Senior Jon Lasinski said, "Their CD is awesome. I can't stop listening to it."

"Roboflow," the bands first single, can be heard on 89.9 WLCA. For more information visit Pomeroy online at *www.pomeroymusic.com.*

Eminem Goes Gospel, Christians Beware!

by Doug Beiser
Senior Editor

Eminem has seen the error of his ways and kicked the drugs and started rapping about God and love.

His new CD, *The Eminem Show*, due out later this year, will reflect his softer side. The first single off this album is a heart-warming song entitled "I See God In Your Eyes." This song is about how much his daughter means to him. "We Made This Life Together," another song on the upcoming album, is a song in the form of a letter to his ex-wife Kim, explaining why they should share custody of their child and how they should put the past behind them.

The influence of God on his life goes beyond his music and, according to Proof, one of the members of D12, "Em is about to open a church and we're going to be his deacons." There is also talk of having Mace and MC Hammer on the new album,

Even his wardrobe and bleached blond hair has changed the "thugged out" white boy. His old look is gone, and he has now died his hair brown and is starting to grow it out to try to look like his role model, Jesus Christ.

Eminem had the following to say about his transformation. "I am sick of being a whiny cry baby and talking about not having any money. I am rolling in dough and I need to give something back, and that something is the Lord's word."

ENTERTAINMENT

RedBird Word August 1984

Matthews Moves to Television!

by Nancy McDonald
Entertainment Editor

All rock stars want to be actors and all actors want to be rock stars. Is this statement true? Well, the former certainly is. Rock star Jon Bon Jovi joined the cast of FOX's *Ally McBeal* this year and Ozzy Osbourne even has his own hilarious reality show on MTV called *The Osbournes*. The newest rock star to make the TV transition is the untouchable Dave Matthews.

Matthews, who is best known for his band the Dave Matthews Band, will be starring in a new NBC "dramedy" next fall. The show, affectionately titled *Boy, Where Are You Heading?*, is about a hitchhiker (Matthews) who travels across the country with a guitar and a lucky sidekick dog named Scabs.

The hitchhiker, whose name has not been decided on although the names Art and Rocky have been suggested, will go to a different city every week, pick a random person and write a song about them. The show hopes to touch viewers' hearts and send them positive messages about hitchhikers. Josh Garrott, who has been a hitchhiker most of his life, said, "I'm glad that they're coming out with a show about hitchhikers. We get a bad rep because we're always bumming rides off people. BUT DUDE!!! That's what we do!"

Matthews, who starred in various plays in his early twenties, was not the network's first choice to play the complicated role of the hitchhiker. Matthews said in an interview with the underground magazine *This is Not a Magazine for Music Tyros*, "They had offered the role to a few people before they asked me. I think they asked Mick Jagger, Steven Tyler, Rob Thomas, Bono, Wayne Newton, and Usher, but they all passed. I feel extremely honored to have gotten the role."

According to NBC, there will be many special guest stars featured on the show. Alanis Morissette, Stevie Wonder, and the great LaToya Jackson have all agreed to appear in an episode. Perhaps one of the biggest guest stars will be Billy Corgan, best known for his former band *Smashing Pumpkins*.

In the pilot episode, which Matthews helped write, Corgan will play himself and challenges the hitchhiker to a "guitar-playing showdown." When asked who will win the showdown, Matthews said with a grin, "I think we all know who's going to win."

Many Dave Matthews fans are ecstatic about his t.v. transition. Senior Jeremy Villareal said, "Dave Matthews is my hero. He can do no wrong"

NBC plans on airing *Boy, Where Are You Heading?* right after Monica Lewinsky's new sitcom, *Internal Affairs*.

Dave Matthews will star in a new NBC "dramedy" next fall. photo courtesy of www.geocities.com

You May Just Die Laughing

by Nancy McDonald
Entertainment Editor

"He's big, he's blue, he's Smoochy. . . and he's got to die!" This is a tagline from the new Robin Williams dark comedy, *Death to Smoochy*.

Williams plays Rainbow Randolph Smiley, a host for a popular children's television show. Randolph gets fired after it is discovered that he is involved in a bribery scandal and is replaced by Sheldon Mopes (Edward Norton), a.k.a. Smoochy. Smoochy is a Barney-esque rhino who quickly becomes a hit with children.

When Randolph finds out that Smoochy is having an affair with his ex-lover, Nora (Catherine Keener), a top programming executive at the network, he soon targets Smoochy for assassination.

Danny DeVito, director of *Throw Mamma From the Train* and *War of the Roses*, costars and directs this disturbingly funny film.

In an interview with *Premiere Magazine*, DeVito said, "We're always looking for movies to take our kids to see. This is not that movie."

Death to Smoochy opens March 19 and is rated-R.

Kids go crazy over Smoochy (Norton). photo courtesy of www.yahoo.com

At the top of this page are pictures of Martin Starr and Frank Kowchevski. photos courtesy of www.freaksandgeeks.com.

nt Bird Unearthed

"I think the most amazing thing is that we kept this thing under wraps for so long without any interferences from the press. We kept the entire thing confidential not even our families knew exactly what we were working on," said Hopp. "The only thing they knew was that we were working on an ancient species of bird," stated Campbell.

Dr. Hopp later told *RBW* that he had no idea how a bird of this kind could have existed so out of time and of origin. "The simple fact that the bird is of dinosaur descent, in my opinion, is so astounding that it will be a wonder of modern evolution for decades to come," stated Hopp.

"Although the bird did not have antlers like that of a deer or a face of a man, the drawings are very accurate and were helpful on the reconstructive process,"said Hopp. Numerous methods were brought about to actually reconstruct the bird. Different methods were applied in making the remnants of the bird show quality. Every inch of the bones have been specially treated in a formula that protects against shattering, breaking and corrosion. "The bird certainly is a nation treasure so we wanted to keep it in the greatest condition possible," stated Hopp.

Since 2000, when the bird was found archaeologists and other evolutionary scientists have been working on every aspect of the ancient bird of prey. Grants were given from both state and federal governments to insure that this legendary project got off the ground. The project took $45 million dollars in restoration costs. Over time though the bird is expected to pay for itself with viewing fees, and the cost that the museums will have to pay to be able to have this treasure on display.

"Two years went by like a week, said Campbell. We worked non stop forty to fifty hours a week." All the hard work paid off and the two doctors can not wait for the release of their newly found pride and joy. "We have put everything into this project and we can not wait for its release. It is truly a sight to see."

Now that almost every aspect of the bird has been taken care of, the bird will be released The doctors reassured everyone that the bird is in the best of conditions.

As of now the bird is being worked on at an institution in Chicago. This institution was asked to remain confidential so the archaeologists my continue their work until the time of the birds release. This place has housed the bird for over two and a half years. Alton will be the first and last to host the bird. Both doctors think the site of the beginning of the tour is only fitting since Alton is the origination of the bird.

From Alton the bird will travel all over the continental United States. It will travel to many museums and institutes from early 2003 to 2008. Including Anchorage, Alaska to Montpelier, Vermont.

Then the bird will begin its European tour. On its European tour it will go first to the United Kingdom. From there it will tour Ireland, Scotland and Great Britain. France and Germany will be the next stops along the well paved road. Despite much controversy it will be on display somewhere in Russia, possibly Moscow. "This is a gift that will be shared with the whole world. We will not let anyone be deprived the chance to see such a wondrous creation," agreed Campbell and Hopp.

When the bird returns, a special museum will be built in the Alton/Godfrey area to house it. It is not known how much the museum will cost, but plans are in the making and it will not cost the government or the tax payers a cent. The money for the museum will be paid for by the funds accumulated from the tour. "The bird will be mutually beneficial for the small town setting of Alton and for the world. For decades to come people will come from all walks of life to see this legend, said Hopp."

We at the Red Bird Word take great pride in protecting the rights of the people involved in this monumental project. While at the same time we pride ourselves on being excellent investigative journalists.

In the media world it is very hard to get great stories to bring forth to the readers..

The only thing that made this story possible was that it is entirely fiction and all names, places, schedules, and general people are purely fictitious.

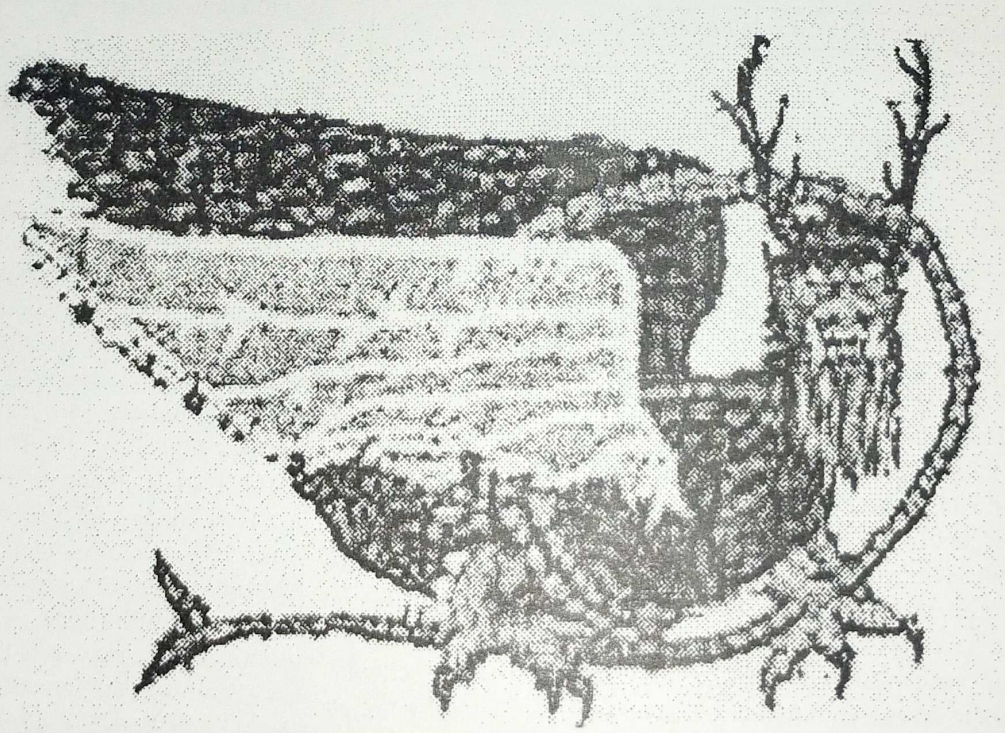
Remnants of Ancie

Coverstory Editor Andrew Duggan
Coverstory by Andrew Duggan

Alton, famous for heated debates in the nineteenth century, and the tallest man in the world. Located in the lawsuit capital of the world, Madison County.

Another infamous legend in the Alton area is the Piasa Bird. A folklore Indian tale from the 1600's. The legend starts when the Illini Indians first made contact with this bird naming it the Piasa Bird or bird that devours men. They described the bird as being the size of a horse or small creature. The bird had huge talons and the face of a man. He had the wings of a dragon and the horns of a deer. The beast was vicious and hunted the Illini Indians. Of course this is all just a tale a story once told around a camp fire to try to keep children in their tribes and safe in their homes. One day the bird came and tried to attack Chief Ouatoga of the Illini tribe, but before he could get to the chief and a poisoned arrow from a swift bow was shot into the beasts heart. A loud screeching gasp was let out from the snarling beast and it fell into the river never to be seen again. The tribe was saved and the monster was destroyed.

If the legend was purely truth, the bird would have to be gone and somewhere out to sea. Somewhere in the Gulf of Mexico.



hoto courtesy ofourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/ eyer_infonet/piasa4.htm

The Mississippi river, though, is a vast body of tide pools and drifts. In recent years the lack of rain in the river has been steadily bringing the water levels down. The boundaries have changed and something suspicious was found along the river. For hundreds of years the bones of something very strange were kept preserved in the mud of the river.

The individual responsible for the remains was an animal behaviorist who was tracking the habits of the bald eag[illegible] native t[illegible] Alton area. The behaviorist, Dr. Roger Campbell, found what looked like the remains of a bird, but it was a large specimen.

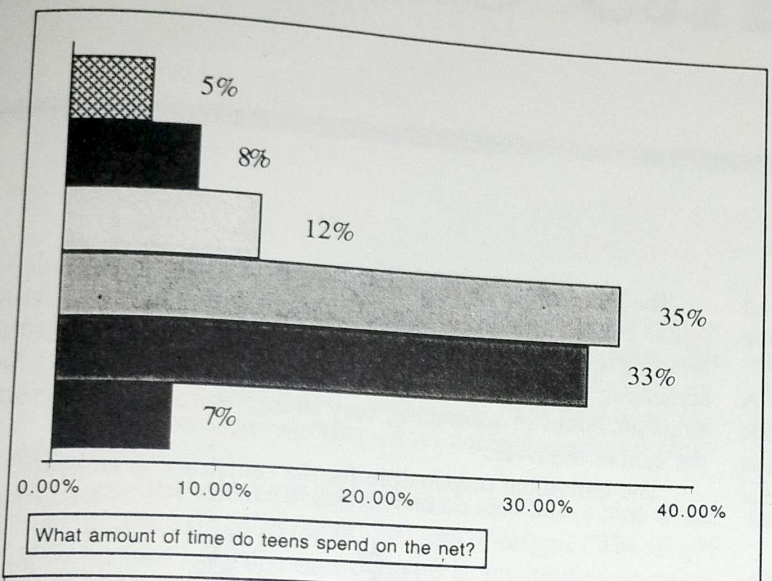
Archaeologist, David Hopp, was intrigued. They found the rest of the bird weeks later, surprisingly all bones were almost exactly intact.

Though it took years to fully reconstruct the ancient bird of prey, the bird is almost ready to make its debut to the nation and soon to the world.

"The drawings of the Illini Indians give a certain light to what the Indians saw of the bird," said Hopp. "We wonder if the bird might be closer related to perhaps that of a lizard or dinosaur. our results of those tests are inconclusive pending DNA testing and other such factual gathering techniques, Hopp added."

Online Overtime: A Teenage Addiction

by Laura Griffith
Features Editor



1-3 hours per day	:	33%	less than 1 hr per day	:	35%
2-4 times per week	:	12%	once a week	:	8%
once a month	:	5%	more than 3 hrs a day	:	7%

A survey of fifty students at Alton High showed that teens spend a lot of time on the internet. Some people say, maybe too much time.

Of those 50 people, 88 percent reported that they do use the internet. (How often? See chart.)

What is there to do on the internet? When asked to circle one or more activities that they do online, 52 percent said they spend time chatting, 68 percent use the net for email, 56 percent play online games, and 44 percent do their homework.

Some popular websites include search engines like *msn.com*, *yahoo.com*, *google.com* and *askjeeves.com*. These sites are normally used for research. Even those who don't have internet privileges at home can have access at school.

"I don't have the internet at home but I am able to use the school's computers to do research for school projects," said Senior Kristina Koenig.

Many students take advantage of online book notes, to help with their reading for school. These can be found at *freebooknotes.com*, *pinkmonkey.com* and *sparknotes.com*, among others.

Shopping online is becoming more popular these days. Almost every store one could think of has a website. One could shop at American Eagle by going to *www.ae.com* without ever leaving the comfort of home. There are also online sites like *ebay.com* and *amazon.com* where one could buy almost anything they desire.

For music fans, there is a site for nearly every band or musician. The same goes for movie fans. If it's lyrics or poetry that one may desire, *lyrics.com* and *poetry.com* are two of the best sites online.

Sports fans also have their array of websites to visit. Some hockey fans reported that two of their favorite sites are *www.nhl.com* and *www.stlblues.com*. Although other sport sites were not mentioned during this survey, there are sites for every other sport as well.

For the people who can't get enough of online games, some great sites include *shockwave.com*, *games.com* and *uproar.com*, a site where it is possible to play a game of Family Feud with people from all over the world.

Finally, for those who really have nothing to do, a site like *bored.com* can be quite amusing. *Bored.com* contains links to some of "the most interesting sites on the net." One of these links is a site called *hotornot.com* where anyone can get on and rate pictures of people, according to whether they really are "hot" or "not."

So when people say that teens are spending too much time on the internet doing nothing, they aren't always right. There's lots to do online to keep someone entertained, it just takes the knowledge to know where to go.

Rockin' Out Rock Springs

by Elaine Myers

Music is a language recognized by everyone. Whether it's bluegrass, hip hop, jazz, or rock n' roll, everybody listens to the one that gets their toes tapping. Well, this summer you can get a taste of it all. Community Celebrations Incorporated (CCI) will be holding a music festival in Rock Springs Park and calling it "A Celebration of Music." This festival will be held July 26 through 28.

CCI is also in charge of other events in the community such as "First Night." CCI is attempting to rejuvenate Rock Springs Park. By doing this they will give our community something new and different to do.

There will be local, regional, and national acts for the entertainment. There is not a definite list of musical guests who will be attending, but by April 30, the list will be completed on CCI's website (*www.celebrationofmusic.com*).

The local college radio station, 89.9 WLCA, will be getting involved along with other radio stations such as Z107.7, and 105.3 The OX. They will be running advertisements for this affair. News Channel 4 will also be advertising this event, so keep your eyes peeled for more information.

Alton High School's National Honor Society is looking for all different types of help. If you are in a band and would like to share your talent, contact any NHS member. They are also looking for help with finding different businesses in the community to help such as McDonalds, Dippin' Dots, Pepsi, and Tropical Sno. If you would be interested in helping at all, please contact any member of NHS.

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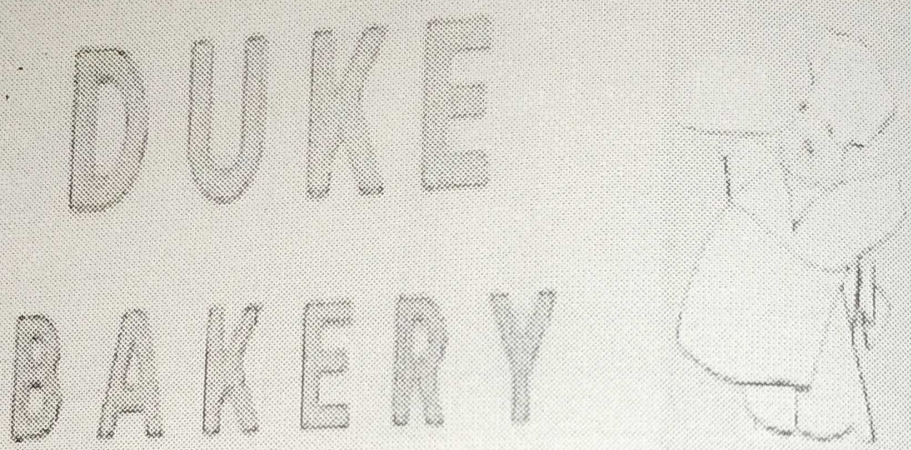
"The official bakery of the RedBird Word"



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Call (618)-462-2922 for all your Spring time goodies

CELEBRITY SCANDALS REVEALED!!!

by Walter Theobald
Copy Editor

Loyal readers, this month I'd planned to expose several deplorable secrets of some of our most beloved celebrities that would shake the very foundation of our way of life. Sadly, before returning from his covert mission to secure evidence, my loyal informant Jim got caught jaywalking in Texas and is currently on death row.

Unfortunately, the Republic of Zimbabwe has demanded that I complete a story this month, but fear not, illiterate readers, for I shall have us out of this predicament faster than a cauliflower snarble. Just as soon as I finish organizing my collection of illegal grey M&Ms... they're grey...!!

"Oh thank God you picked up!! This is my only phone call and I'm cold and my inmate started calling me 'Patty'... I need you to call my wife and get me a lawy--," said Jim shortly before I abruptly hung up. Next time use 1-800-COLLECT. Jerk.

PENGUINS ATTACK!

by Walter Theobald
Copy Editor

Penguin related deaths reached an all-time high this weekend as a college student at LCCC was impaled by a penguin hopped up on Pez. This is the third case of penguin homicide in as many weeks. Luckily, the bird was unharmed.

"They came out of the sky with crimson eyes, and everyone just panicked," recalls Sara Gillespie, lone survivor of last month's infamous downtown massacre. "I hid behind a tree to avoid the coming onslaught of black and white terror," she said.

In response to the latest fatality, anti-penguin rioters staged an assault on the Penguin King's citadel. "I had just seen Crossroads," says one rioter, "so I was reconciled to my own death."

The attack was a success, and in an explosion of green blood and pestilence, the Penguin King fell... and that's where the red fern grows.

Photo shamelessly ripped off www.lesko.com. The point? Even we don't know.

CHASING SILENT BOB

by Julie Strassman
Senior Editor

While perusing *www.viewaskew.com*, home to the wonderful world of Kevin Smith, the incredible writer, director and occasional star of the Jay and Silent Bob movies, I came across some intriguing news. View Askew's auction site, eJay, was auctioning off the huge green shirt worn by Silent Bob in the movie, *Dogma*.

The bidding, which in mid March was up to $350 and going up at a rate of about $75 a day, ended April 6, by which time the price was probably up to $3,000 and the bidder's immortal soul. As I gazed dumbfounded at the monitor, a flood of thoughts tumbled through my mind. Who the heck would pay that much for a shirt?! How do they even know it's the one Silent Bob really wore in the movie?! What kind of sick, money-grubbing bugger has Kevin Smith become?! Where can I get $3,000 and an immortal soul??!!

Yes, I too had shamelessly succumbed to the strange fetish of collecting celebrity clothing, and the only thing that stood between me and a green sweat shirt induced Silent Bob euphoria was this annoying matter of money. There were three reasonable options open to me. I could scream, cry and threaten to burn down the house until my parents just gave up and handed me the cash, pimp out my friends (You'd be amazed what five dollars and a corndog can get you.) or seduce Kevin Smith and use my evil feminine wiles to steal his shirt.

Having already tried the first two courses of action and not having been impressed with the results, there was only one option left. Go to New Jersey and seduce Kevin Smith! And I knew just how to get there. (Author's note: I'd like to apologize in advance for this part of the story. I was going to say I hijacked a plane to Jersey, but that's about as politically correct as wearing a turban in public these days. OK, back to the plot.)

I jumped on my trusty banana seat bicycle and flew to Jersey, landing straight in front of Jay and Silent Bob's Secret Stash, the mecca of Kevin Smith merchandise, owned by the wonderkind himself.

"Alright, Kevin," I screamed, kicking open the doors with my four-inch heeled combat boots, "Prepare to be conquered !"

Silent Bob sports the infamous shirt. Picture courtesy of eJay on www.viewaskew.com

"Oh great," said the clerk (pun completely intended), "Another Lunchbox-crazed dominatrix wannabe from the Midwest here to use her feminine wiles to seduce Kevin Smith and gain a green sweat shirt induced Silent Bob euphoria. When will you people get it through your thick skulls, the man isn't here? What do you think he does, run the cash register? Besides, I've seen his wife and she could definitely take you. But, while you're here, why not check out our new line of Bluntman and Chronic merchandise?"

So, that's the end of my story. I never did get the *Dogma* shirt and I pawned my bike to afford a poster supposedly signed by Kevin Smith. Good news, though. I hear eJay is auctioning off Bluntman's hat next year. I should be able to scrounge up $3,000 by then. If only I knew where to get an immortal soul.

Big Good Story of Great Significance

by Andrew Bott
Humor Editor

Today as I was crossing the PIT sixth hour, a slight altercation seemed to break out somewhere towards the back PIT. One thing I have noticed over the last four years at Alton High, is that whenever a fight breaks out, people come flying from absolutely nowhere to watch the action. Psychopaths leaping over cars, barreling out of third story windows, rappelling down the Main building, just in hopes to see the end of some minor scuffle about something insignificant.

I for one, am in the minority of students who, instead of letting out a primal scream and charging to the epicenter of the problem, continue crossing the PIT, silently chuckling at the poor souls who are about to get arrested (supposedly).

Well, I then thought to myself, "Why do hot dogs come in packages of eight and hot dog buns come in packages of ten?" and then I thought, "I should find out why people fight in the PIT all the time." So, I boldly took it upon myself to go into *INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER MODE*.

I ran home to get my handy magnifying glass and trench coat. I didn't have one of those Sherlock Holmes hats, so I just put two of my dad's baseball caps on, one forwards and one backwards. I then took a taxi back to school because running is hard.

My first interviewee was an anonymous student. Here is a portion of a transcript from that interview:

ME: Why do you think other students run to see fights in the PIT?
KID: I think that students like fights in the PIT.
ME: Why do you feel this way?
KID: Fighting in the PIT is where kids are when they fight.
ME: Um, right. Do you watch the fights?
KID: I have to go. (At this point, the kid stole my magnifying ass and ran away. I was saddened by the whole affair.)

Following this extremely disappointing interview, I came up ith a new approach. If I could instigate a fight myself, then I could t first-hand research.

Hiding behind a trash can in the PIT, I waited until passing pe- d, and then tossed the remainder of my Egg McMuffin© onto first hulking ogre of a high school student walking by. With egg his face, he turned around and looked for the culprit. I incon- cuously pointed to some scrawny toothpick who was walking ay from him and said, "He hit your face with food!!!"

Egg-face instantly took off after toothpick-boy and then tooth- k-boy ran away as fast as his unexercised legs would take him. I amed at the top of my lungs, "FIGHT!" and the stampede en- d. Just as I had seen it before, masses upon masses of people an to follow egg-face and unsuspecting sap throughout the PIT. After a good three-minute chase, the crowd had encircled the two and I broke out my steno-pad.

Egg-face stared at toothpick-boy with pure rage in his eye. He wanted nothing more than to pummel him into the ground with great and massive overkill. Eggie took three massive strides toward toothpick, and the PIT cop busted into the crowd and hauled them both away. "NOOOOOO!" exclaimed I, with six Os.

In an attempt to salvage what was left of my hard work, I pulled some dude out of the circle and asked him, "So why did you run to see this fight?"

He responded by spitting on my left shoe, and stealing my baseball caps.

Slightly frustrated now, I denounced *INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER MODE* and burned my trenchcoat.

After buying back my father's hats, I came to the conclusion that there was no explainable reason why students liked watching fights.

To conclude, here is an analogy to sum up the situation and make me feel like I did real work:

Fights in the PIT is to Alton High students as an electromagnet is to something that sticks to an Electromagnet

The Truth? You Can't HANDLE the Truth!

by Nancy McDonald
Entertainment Editor

I hate it whenever people want to know the truth, like when someone walks up to me and says, "Nancy! I got my hair cut yesterday! What do you think?"

What I want to say is "I'm sorry, I didn't hear a word you just said. I was too busy staring at that porcupine that seems to be wrapped around your head. . . oh, that's your hair. Pardon me!"

Of course, I don't really say that. I say, "Looks great. I love it." Why? Because people don't need to know the truth. Honesty can be your best friend or your worst enemy. Sometimes you can tiptoe around the truth without hurting anyone's feelings.

Take the above situation with the porcupine hair for example. When this person asks me how her hair looks, I could say something like, "Your hair looks like this one person's hair on TV, but I can't quite remember who." I don't tell her that I'm thinking about Bart Simpson, but she's happy that she looks like a TV star and I technically told her the truth.

To sum up, don't ever ask anyone for the truth. It will only lead to heartache and misery. So, honestly, what do you think about this humor article?

RedBird Word
Straight From the Bird's Mouth
April 2002

Have They Forgotten?

by Juan Black
Senior editor

After high school many students go on to college with the aspiration of being teachers. There can be many reasons that they decide that they want to become a teacher. Some have excellent teachers throughout their lives, and they have been so touched and inspired by the impact that they made that they want to go and pass that along to students of their own. For others, it is the exact opposite.

They feel that they had horrible teachers and they want to "fix" education anyway that they can. They want to be the teacher they never had. Regardless of why a future teacher decides to be a teacher, there should be one thing motivating their decision: students and their well being. The purpose of schools is to educate. Schools are designed to be place where student's can learn, grow and develop. Students spend much of their lives in school from kindergarten until senior year. Our future President and the people that will discover the diseases to cure us and our children all have to go to school, and the person that has the longest lasting influence on how lives all around the world will be affected.

Unfortunately, some teachers, fed up with behavior problems from students, low salaries, and restrictions from administrators, have lost interest in the real purpose of and focus of their jobs. They have forgotten that the outlook that they have on the students and their attitudes have a grave impact on many.

All of the dreams that they once had and all the fervor soon disappears and the result is a fifth year teacher that is ready to retire. From these frustrations may come a bad attitude and bitterness. The teacher is so busy with grading papers and making tests, that when a student wants to talk or needs a little bit of extra help, the teacher is unable to accommodate.

On the other side of the spectrum, there are teachers who will bend over backwards for students and the programs and/or departments that they are in. Some are so dedicated that they put their own personal lives on hold, and quality time with their own families suffer. They have not forgotten why they became teachers, and they do everything they can to prepare us for the future. For those who have not forgotten, bravo. Please continue to have a life-changing positive impact on the leaders of tomorrow. For those that have forgotten, I hope that you will realize what an impact you have on the world as educators, and that you will teach and mentor as though you realize it.

What Else is There?

by Kari Oglesby
Backpage editor

People always ask themselves, "What else is there to do?" and "what else in life is there?" Drugs is the one word that may come to some minds when asking themselves these questions. Many consequences come from what teenagers find fun and exciting. These teenage years have some of the biggest affects on the rest of life.

Everyday I wake up, get in the shower, do all of the normal everyday things, and I prepare for a day of new stories. I get to school and hear people wondering about how their lemonade turned pink and how incredibly wasted they got at the party last weekend. I've even heard one about someone who got so drunk that they fell in a pool and almost died! Sarcastically: these stories impress me so much! I love hearing these stories everyday.

As you might know, addiction is what starts everything. Let's say that you and a friend are just TRYING drugs. Did you know that you can get hooked the first time you try marijuana? No April fools here. From my own observations, after addiction takes place, it is very difficult to turn back to a clean world. This trial has just turned your future around.

If asked the question, "What is the most important thing in the world?" the majority would reveal the most popular answer of money. Let me ask you a question. How does a person get money? My guess is a 10-star job. You get a desk, a window, a secretary, pretty much a dream world. Or you can do drugs. Just a reminder, you always have the option of being a drug dealer in jail or being a curb warmer. Which would you choose?

Just to let you know, 8.3 percent of youths ages 12-17 were current users of marijuana in 2000. Also, 113 million Americans age 12 and older reported current use of alcohol. Overall, almost 30 percent of youths ages 12-17 reported current use of illicit drugs in 2000. Another wonderful fact: while taking one puff of a cigarette, you are actually inhaling nearly 4,000 different chemicals. Pretty disgusting, huh?

Four in ten Americans said the drug problem forced them to change the way they lived by making their homes more secure, staying inside at night, and avoiding certain areas. Change your life because of the wrong doing of another? I don't think so.

My opinion on the drug matter doesn't stand alone. I would personally consider it a tragedy having to stay in at night to avoid certain areas because of other people. Is sitting around in a circle smoking marijuana and seeing who can throw up the most alcohol fun these days? We all have to realize that this is the horribly awful truth.

PUSHY BROADS AND POWER TRIPS

REDBIRDWORD APRIL 2002

Letter to the Editor...

by junior Joseph Hilgard

About a month ago, I finally received my pit sticker. After two and a half years of being driven to school and not being picked up by my parents ("We have a son? REALLY? I knew we had a dog, but... and he needs to be picked up when?"), I can finally drive myself and park in the Pit, a place of love and harmony, unless, of course, some obsessive control-freak loses his God-given super-specific parking spot.

One day after school I found a note tucked in the wiper blades of my windshield. It read, "Listen (sic) you stupid junior, people have parking spots and you are in mine. The next five spots in this row are reserved. Park somewhere else or face the consequences." Well, my friend, people do not have parking spots. The Pit is public property, and as I have a legal Pit sticker, I have the right to park there. If I should get a spot before anyone else, I have every right to park there. There's no point in having an aneurysm about it. Do you insist on having the same spot at, say, the local grocery? The Pit is no different.

The real enemies here are those who don't have a Pit sticker but park in the Pit nonetheless. These people reduce the already limited parking space for those who have a right to it. I am told my threatening friend is also a junior and was among those who parked without permission. Through a semester or two of parking there, he seemed to develop an attachment to what isn't his. If the rules were enforced at all in this school he would have been caught and wouldn't be parking in the Pit now, much less claiming draconian rule over his turf. The sorry state of this school's discipline, however, is a topic for another rant. Those who park in the Pit without permission should cause more concern than a junior with permission should.

In closing, let me repeat once again that those who have Pit stickers are not at fault. Whether we are juniors or seniors, any of us with a Pit sticker may park in the Pit. We juniors have waited for years and, at least in my case, played by the rules. Save your indignation for the unauthorized sophomores and juniors. Andrew Bott, you have my blessing to stick the Bologna Launcher in their cars' tail pipes and pull the trigger until quadruple-processed quasi-meat squirts out of their engine valves.

Welcome to the April Fool's Edition. Although April Foo'ls Day was on April 1, we, being people of fun-loving nature, decided to make April Fool's last ALL MONTH LONG! Therefore, some of the articles in this paper were written as an April Fool's joke, and it is your job to find them! Enjoy!

Congratulations to Robert Yancy for winning the March coloring contest!

REDBIRD WORD ROSTER

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OUR MISSION 2001-2002

"News with a purpose...
inform,
enlighten,
and entertain."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The RedBird Word staff would love to hear your feedback. Please send any comments, questions, complaints, or ideas to Mrs. Brave's room, 401.

Alton Senior High School
2200 College Ave.
Alton, IL 62002

Hey Seniors! One month left!

Say Hello To Kario!

Word Find!

J	B	J	D	D	X	P	Y	U	Q	S	U	U	R	A	D	B	H	V	W	V	Q	A	T	A
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Ucantf	**reareno**	**Kedyouh**	**Llluvap**
Indanyw	**Tanyint**	**Ahaifoo**	**Rilfoo**
Ordsbec	**Hepuz**	**Ledyou**	**Lsday**

Looney Laws

Information from Uncle John's Ultimate Bathroom Reader
Believe it or not, these laws are real.

In Las Vegas, N.V., it's against the law to pawn your dentures.

In Natoma, K.A., it's illegal to throw knives at men wearing striped suits.

M.I. laws forbid pet owners from tying their crocodiles to fire hydrants.

If you're 88 years of age or older, it's illegal for you to ride your motorcycle in Idaho Falls, I.D.

It's against the law (not to mention impossible) to whistle under water in V.T.

In A.L., it's illegal to play Dominoes on Sunday.

Double parking in M.N. can result in working on a chain gang with only bread and water.

In Barber, N.C., it's illegal for a cat to fight a dog (or vice versa).

It's illegal to sleep with chickens in Clawson City, M.I... and illegal to walk your elephant without a leash in Wisconsin.

The law prohibits barbers in Omaha, N.E., from shaving the chests of customers.

In C.A., it's illegal to hunt whales from your automobile. It's also against the law to use your dirty underwear as a dust rag.

In St. Louis, M.O., it's illegal for you to drink beer out of a bucket while you're sitting on a curb.

Cotton Valley, L.A., forbids cows and horses from sleeping in a bakery.

Crazy Names

Information from The Best of Uncle John's Bathroom Reader
These are real! Seriously!

A. Moron
Commisioner of Education in the Virgin Islands

Mrs. Belcher Wack Wack
Belcher was her maiden name. Her husband's name was Wack. When he died, she married his brother.

Buncha Love
Living in New York City

Suparporn Poopattana
Living in New York City

Hastie Love
Convicted rapist serving time in T.N.

Dr. Zoltan Ovary
Gynecologist

Katz Meow
Living in Hoquiam, W.A.

Major Minor
An officer in the U.S. Army

Mary Louise Pantzaroff
Living in O.H.

T. Hee
Works in a restaurant in N.Y.

Mrs. V.D. Whynot
Whereabouts unknown

Hyman Pleasure
Assistant Commissioner, New York State Department of Hygiene

Plummer & Leek
Plumbing firm, Norfolk, England

D. Schumuck
Political activist in Ukraine, USSR. He spent seven years in jail before the war for being a Communist. Then, he went back to jail for 30 years for being an anti-Communist.

Zezozose Zadfrack
Charles Manson's son

Lawless & Lynch
Law firm, Jamaica, N.Y.

Cardinal Sin
Archbishop of Manila

Mrs. Screech
Teaches singing in British Columbia

Luscious Pea
Born in L.A.

I Bet You Didn't Know!

April Fool's Day is thought to have originated in France. Before the use of the Gregorian calendar, New Year's celebrations ended on April 1. When New Year's Day was changed to January 1, the people who still celebrated it on April 1 were called April Fools.

In France, the victim of a joke is called an "April Fish" (poisson d'avril). In England, tricks can be played only in the morning. If a trick is played on you, you are a "noodle." In Scotland, you are called an "April gowk," which is another name for a cuckoo bird. In Portugal, April Fool's is celebrated on the Sunday and Monday before Lent. The traditional trick there is to throw flour at your friends. Humor and practical jokes are universal.

"The first of April is the day we remember what we are the other 364 days of the year. "

- American humorist Mark Twain